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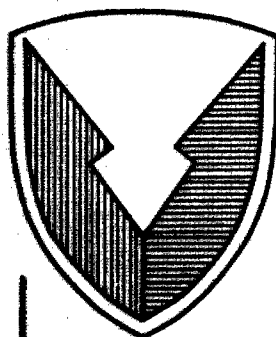
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## C E N T E R

### *Technical Report*



No. 13458

ROBOTIC VEHICLE MESSAGE FORMAT

JULY 1989

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## SUMMARY

For the past decade, different agencies throughout the Department of Defense (DoD) and industry have been involved in the development of unmanned ground-vehicle systems. Most of these vehicle systems were designed to meet certain requirements. Communications interoperability between systems was not one of these requirements.

As the effort to develop unmanned vehicle systems matures and increases in magnitude, communications interoperability between the different systems has become very desirable. This is because systems which can talk to each other have the potential to allow flexible testing in the development phase, and to make possible more effective deployment of these systems once they are mature enough to be fielded.

In the spring of 1987, an effort was begun to determine what would be required to make it possible for different robotic vehicle systems to talk to each other. At the time, many unmanned vehicles had been built by DoD. All, however, could talk only to the dedicated control station that they were exclusively designed for.

It was determined that the most efficient way to achieve interoperability would be through the adoption of a set of communication protocols. The Open Systems Interconnection Reference Model (OSI-RM), developed by the International Standards Organization (ISO), was chosen as the general framework from which to choose and develop protocols. The OSI-RM is a model of a computer communications architecture. It was developed to promote compatible communications among a wide variety of digital systems. The OSI-RM describes seven distinct layers that define the functions involved in communicating.

The U.S. Army Tank-Automotive Command Research, Development & Engineering Center Technical Report, "Robotic Vehicle Communications Interoperability," number 13387, dated August 1988, relates each of the seven layers to robotic vehicle communications. In the report, a message format is proposed for one of the layers.

This report, "Robotic Vehicle Message Format," is a follow-up to report number 13387. Based upon comments and suggestions from the different organizations actively involved in the DoD robotic vehicle communications interoperability effort, the message format proposed in report number 13387 has been extensively modified.

This report describes the modified message format, labeled

the robotic vehicle message format (RVMF). The RVMF will be implemented on unmanned ground vehicle testbeds which are currently being developed. The RVMF will be thoroughly tested on these vehicle systems, and all necessary modifications will be made. The resulting revised message format will then be proposed for standardization for use on future development and production unmanned vehicle systems.

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## 1.0. INTRODUCTION

This technical report, prepared by the Robotics Division of the U.S. Army Tank-Automotive Command (TACOM), describes a message format protocol which will be used by Army robotic vehicle systems. Use of this protocol is one of the steps which will be taken to ensure communications interoperability between new robotic vehicle systems.

This protocol will be extensively tested on the robotic vehicle testbeds being built. Based on these tests, the protocol will be revised and upgraded so that it provides the performance required and desired. Once fully developed, tested, and proven, the protocol will be used as the standard for the robotic vehicle systems which will eventually be fielded.

## 2.0. OBJECTIVES

The two goals of this effort were:

- To develop a protocol which could be used on current robotic vehicle systems to make communications interoperability possible.
- To begin working towards a standard protocol for robotic vehicle systems which will be fielded.

## 3.0. CONCLUSION

The Robotic Vehicle Message Format (RVMF) described in this report provides the functionality needed in a high-level protocol for robotic vehicle systems and subsystems.

## 4.0. RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommend that those agencies involved in the development of robotic vehicle systems or subsystems implement the RVMF in order to be compatible with Army systems, and also to provide input to help define the protocol standard for future Army robotic vehicle systems.

## 5.0. DISCUSSION

The Open Systems Interconnection Reference Model (OSI-RM), developed by the International Standards Organization

(ISO), is used as the general framework to achieve communications interoperability between different robotic vehicle systems. The OSI-RM is not a protocol standard. Instead, it specifies seven distinct layers that define the functions involved in communicating.

One advantage of the OSI-RM is that all the layers are modular. This allows protocols for different layers to be developed individually, and then be brought together. The remainder of this report will describe a message format that will be used as one of the seven layers, the presentation/application layer.

The RVMF is depicted in Figure 5-1. Each field of the RVMF will be described in the following sections. These fields are referenced by their descriptive names.

### 5.1. Field Descriptions

5.1.1. Message Length. This field has a length of one byte (eight bits). It is used to determine the length, in bytes, of the entire message, including the message length byte itself.

5.1.2. Submessage. This is the grouping of all the control commands or status information that have the same Block Address and Unit ID.

5.1.2.1. Submessage length. This field has a length of eight bits. It is used to determine the length, in bytes, of the entire submessage, including the submessage length byte itself.

5.1.2.2. Destination Address. The Address field is made up of two fields, the Block Address and the Unit ID. Each field has a length of eight bits.

The Block Address identifies the category to which the control command or the status message belongs. The many different control commands and the status information that are and will be needed have been grouped into categories based on function. Each of these categories has been given a number, which is represented by the Block Address.

The Unit ID is used to represent a particular unit which is in the category identified by the Block Address. The Unit ID is required because there may be multiple units within a single Block Address. Section 5.2 describes the Block Address and the Unit ID in greater detail.

For example, there is a category represented by a particu-

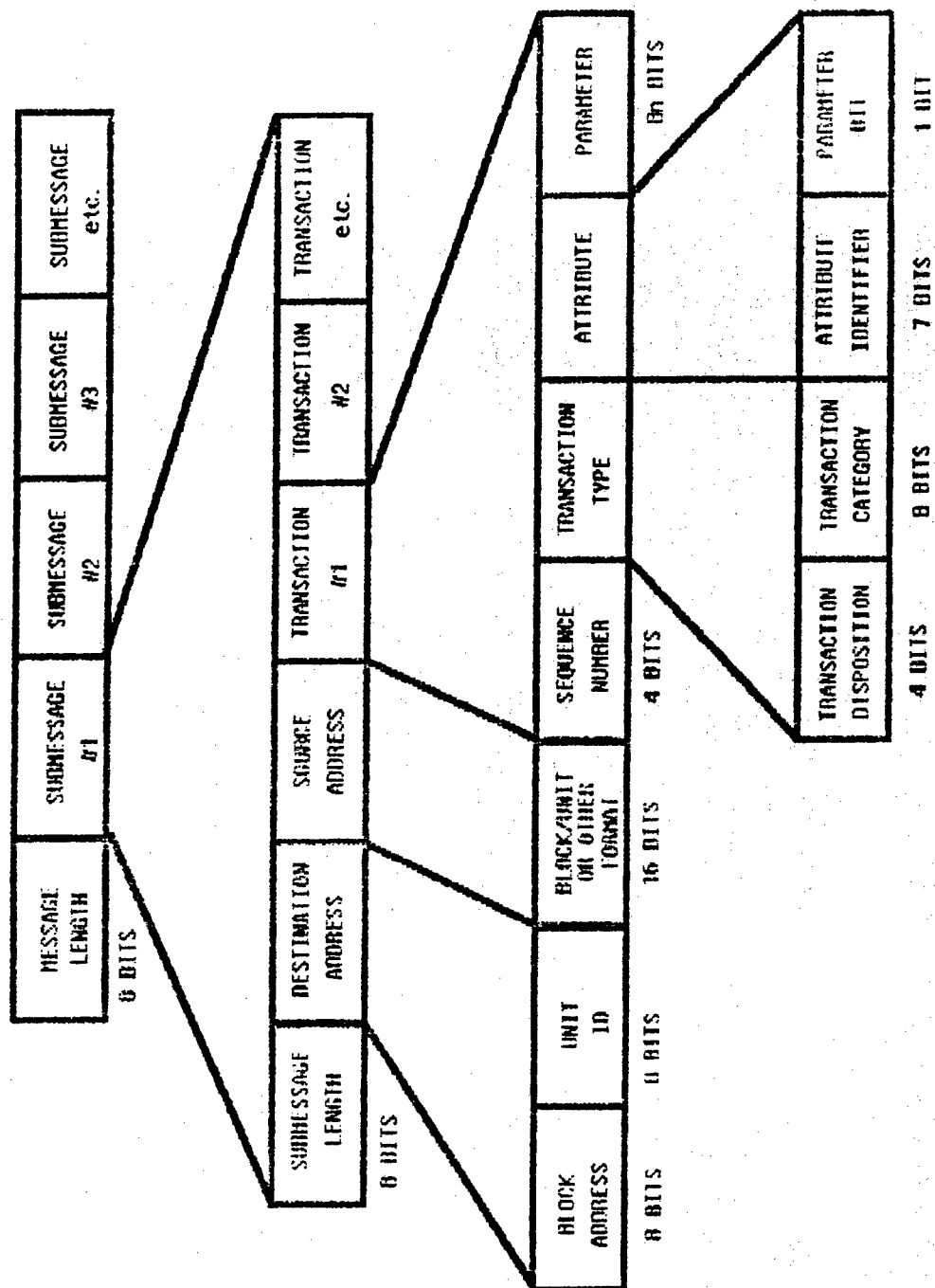


Figure 5-1. Robotic Vehicle Message Format (RVMF)

lar Block Address called "mono video source". The Unit ID is used to differentiate between the forward driving camera, the rear driving camera, the peripheral cameras, and the reconnaissance camera.

5.1.2.3. Source Address. This is a sixteen-bit field which describes the place a message originated. The bytes can represent a Block Address and a Unit ID, as in the Destination Address field (section 5.1.2.2.), or the bytes can represent an arbitrary number assigned by the source.

When a message which requires an acknowledgment is received, the Destination Address and the Source Address are switched. Now what was formerly the Source Address is now the Destination Address. This guarantees that the proper module is acknowledged.

5.1.2.4. Transaction. The Transaction field represents the actual information that is to be transmitted. It consists of four fields. Each is described below.

The Sequence Number is a four-bit field. It is used to identify the acknowledgment returned against the original message.

The Transaction Type is a 12-bit field. It describes the information type, and defines how the recipient should treat the information. The Transaction Type is made up of two fields, the Transaction Disposition field and the Transaction Category field.

The Transaction Disposition is a four-bit field. It is used to give the status/purpose of the particular transaction, for example, if the transaction is initiating a message exchange, or responding to another message.

The Transaction Category is an eight-bit field. It describes the message type, such as a control command requiring or not requiring an acknowledgment.

The different transaction dispositions and categories are listed in section 5.3.

The Attribute is an eight-bit field that consists of an Attribute Identifier and a Parameter Bit.

The Attribute Identifier is a seven-bit field. It identifies the control command or the status information that is being conveyed. Attribute Identifiers are further discussed in section 5.2.

The Parameter Bit field is one bit long. It is used as a binary parameter. A one or a zero in the Parameter Bit field is used to depict one of the two conditions in the following situations:

Parameter Bit value	<u>One</u>	<u>Zero</u>
	On	Off
	Open	Close
	Lock	Unlock
	Left	Right
	Lower	Higher
	In	Out
	Limit As Set	Range Limit
	Default Limit	Range Limit
	Zero	Bit

For example, if the transaction is a control command, and the attribute field identifies that the headlights are to be controlled, then the Parameter Bit would declare the desired state of the lights: a one for lights on, or a zero for lights off.

If a command/status message cannot be depicted by a binary state, the Parameter Bit field is set to zero and is ignored.

The Parameter field contains the attribute data. For example, if the transaction contained status information, and the attribute identified that the status was the engine temperature, then the parameter field would consist of the number which represented the temperature. The length of the parameter field is uniquely defined by the Block Address, Unit ID, Transaction Type, and Transaction Attribute. Due to the use of the Parameter Bit, not all attributes require a parameter field. For attributes that do require the parameter field, however, there will always be the required number of parameters. The Addendum shows which control/status messages require the parameter field, and the length (number of bytes) of each. Section 5.4 describes parameter representations.

## 5.2. Block Address, Unit ID, and Attribute Identifier

5.2.1. Explanation. These three fields are used to uniquely identify any function that is to be performed, or any status information which is to be conveyed. As previously stated, the Block Address identifies the category from which the control command or the status message belongs, the Unit ID is used to represent a particular unit

which is in the category identified by the Block Address, and the Attribute Identifier identifies the particular control command or status information.

Use of the Unit ID provides a regularity to the numbering of units of the same type. If at a later time an additional gun, camera, etc. needs to be added, it will use the same block address as the other gun, camera, etc. Also, this simplifies the software which must send the different commands to the proper subsystems.

5.2.2. Listing. The Addendum lists the different Block Addresses, Unit IDs, and Attribute Identifiers which have been identified thus far, and the numbers which represent them.

5.2.3. Expansion. The Block Address and the Unit ID fields are each eight bits in length, and the Attribute Identifier is seven bits long. This means that the Block Address field can be used to identify up to 256 ( $2^8$ ) categories; the Unit ID field can be used to identify up to 256 units per category; and the Attribute Identifier field 128 ( $2^7$ ) particular messages per unit.

If more than 256 different Block Addresses or Unit IDs are needed, these fields can be expanded to two bytes. An FFH in either field is used to indicate that the next byte is an extension of the field.

### 5.3. Transaction Types

5.3.1. Field justification. This byte is used because there is a great deal of commonality between many of the transactions. This will allow like transactions to be treated the same. This field will simplify software as well as the usage of the protocol.

5.3.2. Transaction Dispositions. There are five transaction dispositions.

5.3.2.1. Initiating. This is used when the message is initiating a communication exchange, not responding to another message.

5.3.2.2. Command received. This is used to verify that a message sent that required an acknowledgment has been successfully received. It is also used when a command is in the process of being executed, but execution is not yet complete.

5.3.2.3. Command executed. This is used to verify that an

action described by a control command and requiring an acknowledgment has been successfully completed.

5.3.2.4. Command unknown. This is used to indicate that a command that was received is unknown, and therefore no action will result.

5.3.2.5. Command execution failed. This is used to make known that an action described by a control command that was sent has not been successfully completed. This type of transaction will always have a one-byte Parameter field, which can be used for a code which describes the reason that the command failed.

5.3.3. Transaction Disposition Codes. Following are the bit patterns for each disposition type.

Initiating	0 0 0 0
Command received	0 0 0 1
Command executed	0 0 1 0
Command unknown	0 0 1 1
Command execution failed	0 1 0 0

5.3.4. Transaction Categories. There are 14 transaction categories.

5.3.4.1. Control with acknowledgment. This indicates that the message is a control command that requires an acknowledgment to verify that the command was either received or completed.

5.3.4.2. Control no acknowledgment. This indicates that the message is a control command that does not require an acknowledgment to verify that the command was either received or completed.

5.3.4.3. Status request. This indicates that the message is requesting that particular status information be provided.

5.3.4.4. Periodic status request. This indicates that the message is requesting that particular status information be provided periodically.

5.3.4.5. Query control. This asks if the command identified by the Address and the Attribute is available on the vehicle.

5.3.4.6. Set alarm limits. This is used when the message will set alarm limits. If the Parameter Bit is set (one), the alarms will be set to the default limits, and the two-byte Parameter field will be ignored. If the Parameter Bit is not set (zero), the lower alarm limit will be set to the number represented by the first byte in the Parameter field, and the upper alarm limit will be set to the number represented by the second byte in the Parameter field. It is possible to use a Parameter field with a length greater than two bytes. The software will determine the Parameter length based on the Block/Unit ID/Attribute.

5.3.4.7. Query alarm limits. This is used to determine what certain alarm limits are.

5.3.4.8. Set operating limits. Used to set the operating limits of the function/subsystem identified by the Destination Address and Attribute fields. If the Parameter Bit is set (one), the operating limit will be set to the default limits, and the two-byte Parameter field will be ignored. If the Parameter Bit is not set (zero), then the lower operating limit will be set to the number represented by the first byte in the Parameter field, and the upper operating limit will be set to the number represented by the second byte in the Parameter field.

5.3.4.9. Query operating limits. This query is used to determine the operating limits of the function/subsystem identified by the Destination Address and Attribute fields.

5.3.4.10. Indication. This is used when the message will provide some status information that was not solicited.

5.3.4.11. Alarm activated. This is used to indicate that an upper alarm limit has been exceeded, or vice versa for a lower alarm limit. There are two types of alarms: 1) Attribute alarms, and 2) Device alarms.

An attribute alarm is used when an attribute of a unit is in a dangerous or alarm condition. A device alarm is used when the device itself is in an alarm condition. For example, if the engine oil pressure (oil pressure is an attribute of the engine) were too low, an attribute alarm would be sent. On the other hand, if an engine died out for an unknown reason, a device alarm would be sent.

An attribute alarm has the code for the particular attribute, which is in an alarm condition, in the Attribute Identifier field. The first byte of the parameter field represents the value of the attribute, and the second byte



gives the applicable error code.

Attribute alarm limits are either set prior to the operation of a system, or they can be set using the "set alarm limits" Transaction Category.

Device alarms are indicated by a zero Attribute Identifier field. An alarm dictionary, which for each device identifies the different alarms and corresponding alarm codes, is needed. These alarm dictionaries are out of the scope of this report.

5.3.4.12. Alarm retired. This Transaction Category is used when an alarm condition which caused an "alarm activated" to be sent no longer exists.

5.3.4.13. Command execution indication. This Transaction Category is used by the sender to notify the recipient that the "control with acknowledgement" transaction previously reported as "command received" has now been completed successfully.

5.3.4.14. Command failed indication: This Transaction category is used by the sender to notify the recipient that the "control with acknowledgment" transaction previously reported as "command received" has failed. A one-byte parameter field can be used as a failure code, the same codes as those used in the "command execution failed."

5.3.5. Transaction Category Codes. Following are the bit patterns for each category type.

Control with acknowledgment	0000 0001
Control no acknowledgment	0000 0010
Status request	0000 0011
Periodic status request	0000 0100
Query control	0000 0101
Set alarm limits	0000 0110
Query alarm limits	0000 0111
Set operating limits	0000 1000
Query operating limits	0000 1001
Indication	0000 1010

Alarm activated	0000 1011
Alarm retired	0000 1100
Command execution indication	0000 1101
Command failed indication	0000 1110

5.3.6. Set up. Transactions which start the dialogue between the initiator and the recipient have zero in the Transaction Disposition field. Responding transactions use the same Transaction Category as the corresponding initiating transaction. The Transaction Disposition will be dependent on the result of executing the initiating message.

#### 5.4. Parameter Representations

5.4.1. Parameter Types. There are three types of parameters which can be used: Numeric (N), select (S), and proportional intensity (PI). The type of parameter associated with each block is shown in the Addendum.

5.4.2. Numeric Parameters. These are represented with two's complement encoding. The numbers will possibly be followed by the following units modifier in ASCII: M (4DH) for million, K (4BH) for thousands, m (6DH) for thousandsths, and u (75H) for millionths. If, a parameter has a possibility of being modified by a units modifier, a modifier will always be required, with a blank character signifying no multiplier. Sixteen- and thirty-two-bit integers with modifiers will also be allowed on a case-by-case basis.

Unless stated otherwise on a case by case basis, the default unit will follow the SI system.

The numeric parameters which describe angles (heading, pitch, etc.) will consist of two bytes and will represent the angle in Binary Angle Measurement (BAM). The format is unsigned, 16 bits, MSB =  $180^\circ$ , LSB =  $180^\circ/32,768$ . Some examples: The binary number 1000 0000 0000 0000 represents  $180^\circ$ . 0100 0000 0000 0000 represents  $90^\circ$ . 0010 0000 0000 0000 represents  $45^\circ$ . 0110 0000 0000 0000 represents  $135^\circ$ . 1111 1111 1111 1111 represents  $359.99^\circ$ .

5.4.3. Select Parameters. These are used when we need to choose one or more options from a group of choices.

5.4.4. Proportional Intensity Parameters. These are used

to represent three types of commands/status:

- Off, incrementally increasing to full on.
- Down, incrementally rising to full up.
- Straight ahead, incrementally changing to full left or full right.

Greater detail is required for the parameters on a cases-by-case basis. This detail is out of the scope of this report.

#### 5.5. Priority Specification

The priority of different messages vary. For some commands, it is important that they be transmitted as soon as they are made, such as "Fire the Gun" or "Emergency Stop." For other messages, the priority is lower, such as "Turn on bilge pumps."

Because of this, each message may be assigned a priority in the protocol software. This assignment would be done by the system developer. The transmission of high-priority commands can then be expedited.

#### 5.6. Status Information

5.6.1. Types. There are three types of status information which can be sent: 1) Periodic, 2) Solicited, and 3) Unsolicited.

5.6.1.1. Periodic. This type of status is continuously sent at a regular interval. Periodic status information can be preprogrammed (automatically sent periodically), or a request can be made to start supplying certain status periodically.

A command requesting periodic status has in its Transaction Category field the "periodic status request" code (0 1 0 0). The Block Address, Unit ID, and Attribute Identifier identify what status is being requested.

The message conveying the status information also has the "periodic status request" code in its Transaction Category field.

5.6.1.2. Solicited. This type of status is sent once per request. A command requesting a one-time status message has in its Transaction Category field the "status request" code (0 0 1 1). The Block Address, Unit ID, and Attribute

Identifier identify what status is being requested.

The message conveying the status information also has the "status request" code in its Transaction Category field.

5.6.1.3. Unsolicited. There are two types of unsolicited status information: 1) Indication and 2) Alarm. The former, which provides an update, has the "indication" code (1 0 1 0) in its Transaction Category field. The latter has the "alarm" code (1 0 1 1) in its Transaction Category field.

## 5.7. General

5.7.1. Addition of New Messages. Currently, only 31 out of 256 possible Block Addresses and 12 out of 256 possible Unit IDs have been used. There is still considerable room for growth.

5.7.2. Message Lengths. The total message length will be limited to 128 bytes. This is done to minimize the transmission latency time. A message size of 128 bytes limits the latency time to about 56 msec at 19.2 kbps.

5.7.3. State Attribute. Many devices will have a "state" attribute. This can be used in one of two ways.

The first way it can be used is to turn a device on or off. In this case, a message has an "initiating" Transaction Disposition and either a "control no acknowledgment" or a "control with acknowledgment" Transaction Category. The Parameter Bit would be set at one to turn the device on, or at zero to turn the device off.

The second way that the state attribute can be used is to indicate if a device is on or off. A device can do this if the information is solicited, or it may do so because its state has changed for some reason.

If the state is solicited, the return message describing the state will have a "command executed" Transaction Disposition, the Parameter Bit will be used to describe the state (one if on, zero if off), and the other fields (including the Transaction Category field) will stay the same.

If the state is not solicited, the message will have an "initiating" Transaction Disposition, an "indication" Transaction Category field, and the Parameter Bit describing the state.

5.7.4. Device ID Attribute. Each device, identified by a unique Block Address and Unit ID, will have as its first Attribute Identifier a four-byte identification attribute. This attribute is used to determine the different characteristics of a certain device. The identification attribute itself will not describe the characteristics. Instead it could be used to inform a control station to check out a certain table which describes all the characteristics.

For example, the Destination Address may say that the "front camera" unit of the "mono video source" block is being controlled. But the controller may not know which attributes can be remotely controlled (focus, iris, contrast, etc.) since many different cameras will be used, and are being used, on unmanned ground vehicles. Having an identification attribute provides the mechanism for a system designer to make his software automatically query, at start up, the devices being controlled. Based on the responses, the available attributes of the different devices can be determined.

When this feature is used, the Transaction Disposition would be "initiating." The Transaction Category would be "status request."

Use of this attribute is optional. The meaning of each identification attribute would have to be coordinated by the developer/user of the control station and of the unmanned vehicle. The meaning of these attributes will not be further defined in this report.

## 5.8. Message Interactions

5.8.1. General. This section describes the details of the initiating transaction and the responding transaction for different transaction types. When a responding message is returned, the Transaction Disposition field is modified, along with parameters according to the different situations. The rest of the fields are kept the same. Also, if one or more of the Block Address, the Unit ID, the Transaction Type, or the Transaction Attribute is unknown, the Transaction Disposition will be set to Command Unknown and sent back with the parameter field describing exactly which field is unknown.

### 5.8.2. Message Interactions.

5.8.2.1. Control with acknowledgment. This message commands some function be performed, and requests a report on the actual performance. After sending the message, the

sender will set up a timer. Within a certain time, if no responding transaction returns, the timer will time out and the same command will be tried n times. If after n tries there is still no response, the timed-out situation will be reported to the application software which in turn, may report it to the operator. The following are the possible responses:

- Command Received: Normally, if a command cannot be completed within 0.5 seconds, a Command Received response will be sent first. Later, when the execution finishes, the Command Execution Indication or Command Failed Indication will be sent.
- Command Executed: If a command can be executed within 0.5 seconds, it can send back the Command Executed transaction which implies that the command has been received.
- Command Execution Failed: If the receiving system is unable to execute a command it received, the Command Execution Failed response will be sent.
- Command Unknown: If one or more of the Block Address, the Unit ID, the Transaction Type, or the Transaction Attribute is unknown, the response will be the Command Unknown Transaction Disposition. The parameter field will describe exactly which field is unknown.

5.8.2.2. Control no acknowledgment. This message commands some function to be performed, but does not require any acknowledgment. After this message is sent out, no response is expected unless the command cannot be executed, or if it is unknown. For example, during teleoperation, if a driver pushes the brake pedal, the brake commands will be sent to the RV using Control No Acknowledgment transactions. The driver gets direct feedback by seeing the vehicle slowing down. The following are the possible responses:

- Command Execution Failed
- Command Unknown

5.8.2.3. Status request. This Transaction Type requests a report on the status of a device or module. If no response is returned from the RV within a certain time (time to be determined), the message will be retried n times (n to be determined). If after n tries no response is returned, the

time out situation will be reported to the application software and possibly to the operator. The following are the possible responses:

- Command Executed
- Command Execution Failed
- Command Unknown

5.8.2.4. Periodic status request. This Transaction Type asks for a report on the status of a device or module on a periodic basis. The first acknowledgment returned indicates a mechanism has been set up to report the requested status periodically. If no Command Executed response is returned within a certain time, the request will be made n more times. If no response is returned after n tries, the timed-out situation will be reported to the application software and possibly to the operator. If the Periodic Status Request is executed successfully, the RV will continue to send the desired information at the requested rate until it receives a cancellation command. A command with the update rate set to zero is considered to be a cancellation command. The following are the possible responses:

- Command Execution Failed
- Command Unknown
- Command Executed

5.8.2.5. Query control. This Transaction Type can be used to verify that an attribute is modifiable without causing any action. If no response is returned within a certain time, the message will be sent n times before it gives up. If there is no response returned after n tries, the timed-out situation will be reported to the application software and possibly to the operator. The following are the possible responses:

- Command Executed
- Command Unknown

5.8.2.6. Set alarm limits. This Transaction Type sets the upper and lower limits for alarms. The parameter field contains the limits. If no response is returned within a certain time, the message will be sent n times. If there is no response returned after n tries, the timed-out situation will be reported to the application software and possibly to the operator. The following are the possible

responses.

- Command Executed
- Command Execution Failed
- Command Unknown

5.8.2.7. Query alarm limits. This Transaction Type asks for a report on the actual alarm limits as set or the allowed range of the attribute. In the latter case, if the software has set a range for alarm limits, it reports the range limits. Otherwise, it reports the hardware alarm limits. If no response is returned within a certain time, the message will be sent n times. If there is no response returned after n tries, the timed-out situation will be reported to the application software and possibly to the operator. The following are the possible responses:

- Command Executed
- Command Unknown

5.8.2.8. Set operating limits: This transaction sets the upper and lower limits of an operating parameter. If no response is returned within a certain time, the message will be sent n times. If there is no response returned after n tries, the timed-out situation will be reported to the application software and possibly to the operator. The following are the possible responses:

- Command Executed
- Command Execution Failed
- Command Unknown

5.8.2.9. Query operating limits. This Transaction Type asks for a report on either the actual operating limits or the range limits of the attribute. In the latter case, if the software has defined the operating range limits, it reports those limits. Otherwise, it reports the hardware operating limits. If no response is returned within a certain time, the message will be sent n times. If there is no response returned after n tries, the timed-out situation will be reported to the application software and possibly to the operator. The following are the possible responses:

- Command Executed



- Command Unknown

5.8.2.10. Indication. The Indication message is sent to declare that some status has changed. The message will be continually sent until an acknowledgment is received. The response is:

- Command Received: The transaction is returned with the Transaction Disposition changed, and without any parameter.

5.8.2.11. Alarm Activated. An Alarm message is sent when some critical condition is present. The message will be continually sent until an acknowledgement is received. The response is:

- Command Received: The transaction is returned with the Transaction Disposition changed, and without any parameter.

5.8.2.12. Alarm retired. This message is sent to declare that the previously reported critical condition has returned to normal. This message will be continuously sent until it gets an acknowledgment. The response is:

- Command Received: The transaction is returned with the Transaction Disposition changed, and without any parameter.

## 5.9. Message Development

A general methodology to develop messages using the RVMF follows.

The numerical code for each field should be identified.

- The Block Address, Unit ID, and Transaction Attribute of each function are taken from the Addendum.
- The source address is set by the software. If the message is a response to a previous message, the Destination Address and the Source Address are simply switched. What was formerly the Source Address is now the Destination Address. This guarantees that the proper module is acknowledged.
- The Transaction Type can be found in sections 5.3.3. and 5.3.4. of this report.

- The Sequence Number is a four-bit number. There is not a sequential correspondence between different Sequence Numbers in the same Submessage or Message. The only correspondence is between the Sequence Number of an initiating transaction and that of a responding transaction.
- The value of the Parameter Bit and the Parameter field are dependent on the transaction.

Once the value for each field is obtained, the transactions should be grouped as submessages (any transactions with the same Block Address and the same Unit ID). The Submessage Length field can now be determined.

The last step is to group all the submessages, and to determine a value for the Message Length field.

#### 5.10. Examples

Examples are now presented in order to clarify how the message format works.

5.10.1. Example 1. Personnel in a control station are remotely driving (full throttle, straight steer) an unmanned vehicle, are turning on the headlights, and are requesting status as to how much fuel remains in the main fuel tank.

Following the methodology described in section 5.9, the values for the initial fields can be determined. They are shown on the chart on the following page.

After putting in the values on the chart, group the commands as submessages. Since each command has a different Block Address and Unit ID, each command is a separate submessage.

Next determine the values for the Submessage Length fields. All four commands have seven fields: 1) Submessage Length, 2) Block Address, 3) Unit ID, 4) Source Address, 5) Sequence Number, 6) Transaction Type, and 7) Transaction Attribute. These seven fields occupy eight bytes. In addition, the throttle and steering commands each have a one-byte Parameter field. The Submessage Length values are:

Throttle	09H	Lowbeam light	08H
Steering	09H	Fuel status	08H

The last value to be determined is the Message Length.

This is simply the sum of the Submessage Length values, plus one for the Message Length field itself. The value is  $09H + 09H + 08H + 08H + 01H = 23H$  ( $35_{10}$ ).

The complete message is:

```
23 09 02 01 xx xx 50 02 0A FF 09 04 01 xx xx 20 02 04 00
08 14 02 xx xx A0 02 05 08 06 01 xx xx 40 03 04
```

Note that xx xx depicts the Source Address.

Command:	Throttle	Steer	Headlights	Fuel level
Block Name:	Power plant	Steering	Lights	Fuel
Block Address:	02H	04H	14H	06H
Unit ID:	Main Engine	Steering	Low beam lights	Fuel tank A
Unit Address:	01H	01H	02H	01H
Sequence Number:	5H	2H	AH	4H
Transaction Disposition:	0H	0H	0H	0H
Transaction Category:	02H	02H	02H	03H
Transaction Attribute:	Throttle	Setting	State	Level gauge
Attribute Identifier:	05H	02H	02H	02H
Parameter Bit:	NA (0)	NA (0)	1	NA (0)
Attribute Field:	0000 1010	0000 0100	0000 0101	0000 0100
Parameter:	FF (full)	00 (straight)	NA	NA

5.10.2. Example 2. This is a message sent from an unmanned vehicle to the control station. It is sent after

the receipt of the message described in section 5.10.1. The message gives the engine RPM, the fuel level, the vehicle speed, and an alarm that a chemical agent has been detected.

Again, the methodology described in section 5.9 will be used to determine the values for the different fields. They are shown on the chart on this page.

Command:	RPM	Fuel level	Speed	Alarm
Block Name:	Power plant	Fuel	Navigation	Sensors
Block Address:	02H	06H	10H	19H
Unit ID:	Main Engine	Tank A	Main	Chemical
Unit Address:	01H	01H	01H	03H
Sequence Number:	6H	4H	7H	2H
Transaction Disposition:	2H	2H	2H	0H
Transaction Category:	04H	03H	04H	0BH
Transaction Attribute:	RPM	Level	Speed	Alarm
Attribute Identifier:	0000 100	0000 010	0001 000	0000 100
Parameter Bit:	NA (0)	NA (0)	NA (0)	1
Attribute Field:	08H	04H	10H	09H
Parameter:	80H (half)	40H (1/4 tank)	C0H	YY YY

Note that the Sequence Number for the "fuel tank level" transaction above is the same as the Sequence Number for the "request for fuel tank level status" transaction in the

first example.

Now group the commands as submessages. Since each command has a different Block Address and Unit ID, each command is a separate submessage.

Next get the values for the Submessage Length fields. All four commands have eight fields: 1) Submessage Length, 2) Block Address, 3) Unit ID, 4) Source Address, 5) Sequence Number, 6) Transaction Type, 7) Transaction Attribute, and 8) Parameter field. The Submessage Length values are:

RPM	09H	Speed	09H
Fuel	09H	Chemical alarm	0AH

The last value to be determined is the Message Length. This is simply the sum of the Submessage Length values, plus one for the Message Length field itself. The value is  $09H + 09H + 09H + 0AH + 01H = 26H$  (38<sub>10</sub>).

The "fuel tank level" transaction is a response to the request in the first example for that information. The "powerplant RPM" and the "navigation speed" transactions are responses to previous requests for periodic status. Therefore, the original Source Addresses, depicted by xx xx, are now in the Destination Address fields, and the original Destination Addresses are now in the Source Address fields.

The complete message is:

```
26 09 xx xx 02 01 62 04 08 80 09 xx xx 06 01 42 03 04 40
09 xx xx 10 01 72 04 10 C0 0A 19 03 xx xx 20 0B 09 yy yy
```

Note that yy yy depicts the value of the attribute, and the applicable error code.

5.10.3. Example 3. This is a message sent from a control station to an unmanned vehicle. The commands tell the vehicle to come to a complete halt (full brake, zero throttle), to power up the weapons platform, and to send vehicle attitude data (roll, pitch).

Again, the methodology described in section 5.9 will be used. Because of the length of this message, two charts will be needed. They are shown on the following two pages.

After putting in the values on the chart, group the commands as submessages. The first three commands each have a different Destination Address, so each command is a sepa-

rate submessage. The last two commands have an identical Destination Address, so they will be grouped as one submessage.

Next get the values for the Submessage Length fields. The first three commands have seven fields: 1) Submessage Length, 2) Block Address, 3) Unit ID, 4) Source Address, 5) Sequence Number, 6) Transaction Type, and 7) Transaction Attribute. In addition, the throttle and braking commands each have a one-byte Parameter field. The last two commands share the same Submessage Length, Block Address, Unit ID, and Source Address fields, but have separate Sequence Numbers, Transaction Types, and Transaction Attributes.

Command:	Full brake	Zero throttle	Platform power
Block Name:	Brakes	Powerplant	Movable platform
Block Address:	03H	02H	18H
Unit ID:	Regular	Engine	Weapon
Unit Address:	01H	01H	02H
Sequence Number:	AH	BH	CH
Transaction Disposition:	0H	0H	0H
Transaction Category:	02H	02H	01H
Transaction Attribute:	Setting	Throttle	State
Attribute Identifier:	0000 010	0000 101	0000 010
Parameter Bit:	NA (0)	NA (0)	1
Attribute Field:	04H	0AH	05H
Parameter:	FFH (full)	00H (zero)	NA

Command:	Request roll	Request pitch
Block Name:	Navigation	Navigation
Block Address:	10H	10H
Unit ID:	Main	Main
Unit Address:	01H	01H
Sequence Number:	9H	AH
Transaction Disposition:	0H	0H
Transaction Category:	03H	03H
Transaction Attribute:	Roll	Pitch
Attribute Identifier:	0000 101	0000 110
Parameter Bit:	NA (0)	NA (0)
Attribute Field:	0AH	0CH
Parameter:	NA	NA

The Submessage Length values are:

Brake	09H	Platform power	08H
Throttle	09H	Navigation info	0BH

The last value to be determined is for the Message Length. This is simply the sum of the Submessage Length values, plus one for the Message Length field itself. The value is  $09H + 09H + 08H + 0BH + 01H = 26H$  ( $38_{10}$ ).

The complete message is:

```

26 09 03 01 xx xx A0 02 04 FF 09 02 01 xx xx 70 02 0A 00
08 18 02 xx xx C0 01 05 0B 10 01 xx xx 90 03 0A

```

A0 03 0C B0 03 0E

Note that xx xx depicts the Source Address.

5.10.4. Example 4. This is a message sent from an unmanned vehicle to the control station. It is sent after the receipt of the message described in section 5.10.3. It returns status information requested of the navigation system. Note that the acknowledgment of the powering up of the movable weapon platform is not in this message. This is because the responses to commands and requests packed into the same initiating message will not necessarily be packed in the same responding message.

Again, the methodology described in section 5.9 will be used. The values for the initial fields are determined, and are shown on the chart on the following page.

After putting in the values on the chart, group the messages as submessages. The two navigation messages can be grouped as a single submessage.

Next get the value for the Submessage Length field. The submessage has four fields: 1) Submessage Length, 2) Block Address, 3) Unit ID, and 4) Source Address. Each of the two transactions has its own Sequence Number, Transaction Type, Transaction Attribute, and a two-byte Parameter field.

Navigation      0FH

The last value to be determined is for the Message Length. This is simply the Submessage Length value, plus one additional byte for the Message Length field itself. The value is 0FH + 01H = 10H (16<sub>10</sub>).

As in the second example, the original Destination Address will now be in the Source Address field. Likewise, the original Source Address, depicted by xx, will now be in the Destination Address field. Also, note that the Sequence Numbers correspond to the Sequence Numbers in Example 2.

The complete message is:

10 0F xx xx 10 01 92 03 0A 04 00 A2 03 0C 40 00

Note that xx xx depicts the original Source Address.



Command:	Roll Status	Pitch Status
Block Name:	Navigation	Navigation
Block Address:	0AH	0AH
Unit ID:	Main	Main
Unit Address:	01H	01H
Sequence Number:	9H	AH
Transaction Disposition:	2H	2H
Transaction Category:	03H	03H
Transaction Attribute:	Roll	Pitch
Attribute Identifier:	0000 101	0000 110
Parameter Bit:	NA (0)	NA (0)
Attribute Field:	0AH	0CH
Parameter:	04 00H (2.8°)	40 00H (45°)



## ADDENDUM



# MESSAGE DICTIONARY

DESCRIPTION: This addendum is a dynamic document. It is not currently complete, nor will it ever be finished. When new functions to be controlled or monitored are identified, they will be added to this message dictionary. This allows the RVMF to be flexible, and to accommodate change as the technology of controlling robotic vehicles matures. In addition, the exact meaning of the message parameters must be determined on a message by message basis. This has not yet been done, and is out of the scope of this report.

KEY: PB = Parameter Bit  
 PI = Proportional Intensity  
 N = Numeric  
 S = Select

Block Name	Unit	Block Address	Attribute Name	Identifier	Parameter Type	Parameter Byte Length
RV system		01H				
RV 1	01H					
Identification				01H	N	4
State				02H	PB	0
Silent watch				03H	PB	0
RV 2		02H				
RV 3		03H				
power plant		02H				
Main engine		01H				
Identification				01H	N	4
State				02H	PB	0
Cold start				03H	PB	0

Block Name	Unit Name	Block Address	Unit ID	Attribute Identifier	Parameter Type	Parameter Byte Length
	<u>Attribute Name</u>					
	Tactical idle			04H	PB	0
	RPM			05H	N	1
	Throttle			06H	PI	1
	Running hours			07H	N	1
	Oil pressure			08H	PI	1
	Oil level gauge			09H	PI	1
	Oil temperature			0AH	PI	1
	Fuel rate			0BH	N	1
	Fuel on/off			0CH	PB	0
	Coolant temperature			0DH	N	1
	Battery charge			0EH	PB	0
	Throttle tactile feedback			0FH	PI	1
	Choke			10H	PB	0
APU			02H			
Smoke generator engine			03H			
Brakes		03H				
Regular			01H			
Identification				01H	N	4
Setting				02H	PI	1
Tactile feedback				03H	PI	1
Brake line pressure				04H	PI	1
Parking brake			02H			
Service brake			03H			
Steering		04H				
Main steering			01H			

Block Name	Unit Name	Block Address	Unit ID	Attribute Identifier	Parameter Type	Parameter Byte Length
Unit Name	Attribute Name					
Identification	Setting			01H	N	4
Tactile feedback				02H	PI	1
				03H	PI	1
Drive train		05H				
Transmission			01H			
Identification				01H	N	4
Gear				02H	S	1

NOTE: Select parameter representations for the Gear attribute.

Neutral	00H
Drive 1	01H
Drive 2	02H
Drive 3	03H
Drive 4	04H
Drive 5	05H
Drive 6	06H
Reverse 1	FFH
Reverse 2	FEH
Park	7FH
Tow	7EH
Pivot	7DH

Fluid pressure				03H	PI	1
Fluid temperature				04H	N	1

Transfer case			02H			
Identification				01H	N	4
State				02H	PB	0

Block Name	Unit Name	Block Address	Unit ID	Attribute Identifier	Parameter Type	Parameter Byte Length
	<u>Attribute Name</u>					
Setting				03H	S	1

NOTE: Select parameter representations for the Setting attribute.

Neutral 00H  
 Low low 01H  
 Low 02H  
 High 03H

Wheel setting			04H		S	1
Identification				01H	N	4
Wheel drive				02H	S	1

NOTE: Select parameter representations for the Wheel drive attribute.

Zero wheel drive 00H  
 (propeller drive) 02H  
 Two wheel drive 04H  
 Four wheel drive 06H  
 Six wheel drive

Suspension		05H				
Conventional			01H			

Identification				01H	N	4
Shock height				02H	N	1
Suspension height				03H	N	1

Fuel		06H				
Fuel tank A			01H			



Block Name	Unit Name	Attribute Name	Block Address	Unit ID	Attribute Identifier	Parameter Type	Parameter Byte	Parameter Length
		Identification			01H	N	4	
		Level gauge			02H	PI	1	
		Fuel temperature			03H	PB	0	
		Filler lock/unlock			04H	PB	0	
		Filler open/close			05H	PB	0	
		Fuel tank B		02H				
		Alternator	07H					
		Main alternator		01H				
39		Identification			01H	N	4	
		Voltage			02H	N	1	
		Current			03H	N	1	
		Capacity			04H	N	1	
		Temperature			05H	N	1	
		Circuit Breaker	08H					
		Master		01H				
		Identification			01H	N	4	
		State			02H	PB	0	
		Light		02H				
		Identification			01H	N	4	
		State			02H	PB	0	
		Ignition		03H				
		Identification			01H	N	4	

Block Name	Unit Name	Attribute Name	Block Address	Unit ID	Attribute Identifier	Parameter Type	Parameter Byte Length
State					02H	PB	0
Brake boost			04H				
Identification State					01H	N	4
					02H	PB	0
Weapon			09H				
Main gun				01H			
Identification State					01H	N	4
Trigger					02H	PB	0
					03H	PB	0
Coaxial machine gun				02H			
Identification State					01H	N	4
Trigger					02H	PB	0
					03H	PB	0
Grenade launcher			0AH				
Launcher one				01H			
Identification State					01H	N	4
Trigger					02H	PB	0
					03H	PB	0
Launcher two				02H			
Main gun ammunition			0BH				
					01H	N	4
					02H	PB	0
					03H	PB	0

NOTE: The unit IDs are the different types of ammunition available.

Block Name	Unit Name	Block Address	Unit ID	Attribute Identifier	Parameter Type	Parameter Byte Length
Identification State (loaded/unloaded) Quantity				01H	N	4
				02H	PB	0
				03H	N	1
Coaxial gun ammunition		0CH				
Navigation		10H				
Main unit			01H			
Identification State Heading Altitude Roll Pitch Speedometer Odometer Doppler speed Wheel count speed UTM coordinates Delta Latitude Longitude				01H	N	4
				02H	PB	0
				03H	N	2
				04H	N	1
				05H	N	2
				06H	N	2
				07H	N	1
				08H	N	1
				09H	N	1
				0AH	N	1
				0BH	N	8
				0CH	N	6
				0DH	N	1
				0EH	N	1
GPS			02H			
Radio		11H				
VHF radio			01H			
Identification State				01H	N	4
				02H	PB	0

Block Name	Unit Name	Block Address	Unit ID	Attribute Identifier	Parameter Type	Parameter Byte Length
	<u>Attribute Name</u>					
	Frequency			03H	N	1
	Transmit power level			04H	N	1
	Receive signal level			05H	N	1
	Link connectivity			06H	PB	0
	Microwave transmitter #1		02H			
	Microwave receiver #1		03H			
	Microwave transmitter #2		02H			
	Microwave receiver #2		03H			
	Microwave transmitter #3		02H			
	Microwave receiver #3		03H			
	Microwave transmitter #4		02H			
	Microwave receiver #4		03H			
Antenna		12H				
VHF antenna			01H			
Identification				01H	N	4
State				02H	PB	0
Polarity				03H	S	1
Attitude				04H	N	2
Azimuth				05H	N	2
Elevation				06H	N	1
Auto-track on/off				07H	PB	0
Microwave antenna			02H			
Fiberoptics		13H				
Main system			01H			
Identification				01H	N	4

Block Name	Unit Name	Block Address	Unit ID	Attribute Identifier	Parameter Type	Parameter Byte Length
State						
	Fiber optic cable length			02H	PB	0
	Fiber optic cable dispensed			03H	PB	0
Lights						
		14H		04H	N	1
	High beam		01H			
Identification						
	State			01H	N	4
				02H	PB	0
Low beam						
	Parking lights		02H			
	Left turn indicator		03H			
	Right turn indicator		04H			
	Hazard lights		05H			
	Blackout lights		06H			
	Fog lights		07H			
	Back-up lights		08H			
	Exterior flood lights		09H			
	Spot light		0AH			
	Interior lights		0BH			
			0CH			
Mono Video Source						
		15H				
	Front camera		01H			
Identification						
	State			01H	N	4
	Zoom			02H	PB	0
	Focus			03H	PI	1
	Contrast			04H	PI	1
	Sight type			05H	PI	1
			06H	PB	0	

Block Name	Unit Name	Attribute Name	Block Address	Unit ID	Attribute Identifier	Parameter Type	Parameter Byte Length
		Thermal polarity			07H	PB	0
		Reticle			08H	PB	0
		Shutter speed			09H	N	1
		De-icer			0AH	PB	0
		Wash/wipe			0BH	PB	0
		Convergence			0CH	PI	1
		Iris			0DH	PI	1
		Scan rate			0EH	PI	1
		Sector size			0FH	PI	1
		Stand by			10H	PB	0
		Gain			11H	PI	1
		Field of view			12H	N	1
		Auto focus			13H	PB	0
		Auto iris			14H	PB	0
		Front stereo left camera		02H			
		Front stereo right camera		03H			
		Left peripheral camera		04H			
		Right peripheral camera		05H			
		Rear camera		06H			
		Reconnaissance camera		07H			
		Driver's thermal viewer		08H			
		FLIR		09H			
		Gun sight		0AH			
		Road following camera		0BH			
		Stereo Video Source	16H				
		TBD					
		Digital Video Source	17H				
		TBD					

Block Name	Unit Name	Block Address	Unit ID	Attribute Identifier	Parameter Type	Parameter Byte Length
Movable platforms		18H				
Reconnaissance			01H			
Identification State				01H	N	4
Azimuth rate				02H	PB	0
Elevation rate				03H	PI	1
Height				04H	PI	1
Position				05H	PI	1
Azimuth position				06H	S	1
Elevation position				07H	N	1
Automatic drift compensation				08H	N	1
				09H	PB	0
Weapon platform			02H			
Turret			03H			
Sensors		19H				
Nuclear radiation sensor			01H			
Identification State				01H	N	4
Type				02H	PB	0
Level				03H	S	1
				04H	PI	1
Biological sensor			02H			
Chemical agent sensor			03H			
Radar detector			04H			
Magnetic field detector			05H			
Motion detector			06H			
Frequency detector			07H			
Light detector			08H			

Block Name	Unit Name	Attribute Name	Block Address	Unit ID	Attribute Identifier	Parameter Type	Parameter Byte Length
		Sonic detector		09H			
		Rain detector		0AH			
		Snow detector		0BH			
		River depth		0CH			
		River current speed		0DH			
		Exterior temperature		0EH			
		Obstacle detector		0FH			
		Vehicle intrusion detector		10H			
		Vehicle hit detector		11H			
Bilge pump			1AH				
Front pump			01H				
		Identification State			01H	N	4
					02H	PB	0
Rear pump			02H				
Vehicle environmental conditioners			1BH				
Heater			01H				
		Identification State Temperature Fan speed			01H	N	4
					02H	PB	0
					03H	N	1
					04H	PI	1
Air conditioner			02H				
NBC system			03H				
Vent			04H				
Vent fan			05H				



Block Name	Block Address	Unit ID	Attribute Identifier	Parameter Type	Parameter Byte Length
Unit Name					
Attribute Name					
Defroster		06H			
Vehicle environmental condition	1CH				
Main area		01H			
Identification			01H	N	4
Temperature			02H	N	1
Cabin pressure			03H	N	1
Moisture level (humidity)			04H	N	1
Absorbed power			05H	N	1
Compartment one		02H			
Windows	1DH				
All windows		01H			
Identification			01H	N	4
State			02H	PB	0
Heated glass			03H	PB	0
Washers			04H	PB	0
Wipers		02H			
Identification			01H	N	4
State			02H	PB	0
Fire suppression system	1EH				
Main system		01H			

Block Name	Block Address	Unit ID	Attribute Identifier	Parameter Type	Parameter Byte Length
Unit Name					
Attribute Name					
Identification State			01H 02H	N PB	4 0
Doors	1FH				
All doors		01H			
Identification State			01H	N	4
Open			02H	PB	0
Lock			03H	PB	0
			04H	PB	0
Horn	20H				
Main horn		01H			
Identification State			01H 02H	N PB	4 0
Video switcher	21H				
Main switcher		01H			
Identification State			01H 02H	N PB	4 0
In (Block Address and Unit ID of video source)			03H	S	2
Out (Output channel)			04H	N	1
Laser range finder (LRF)	22H				
Gun sight LRF		01H			
Identification			01H	N	4

Block Name	Unit Name	Attribute Name	Block Address	Unit ID	Attribute Identifier	Parameter Type	Parameter Byte Length
	State				02H	PB	0
	Range				03H	N	1
	State				04H	PB	0
	Return				05H	PB	0
	Trigger				06H	PB	0
	Reconnaissance LRF			02H			
	Mission module		23H				
	Smoke generator			01H			
	Identification				01H	N	4
	State				02H	PB	0
	Obscurant type				03H	S	1



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